



## **2015 FLAG FOOTBALL**

# **OFFICIAL LEAGUE HANDBOOK**

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## I. General League Information

1. League fees and deadlines – The league fee for the 2015 season is \$200. Checks should be made payable to the City of Waterville. League fees are due no later than October 5, 2015. Teams that have not paid the league fee in full by November 2, 2015, will be ineligible to play in the end of the season playoffs, unless payment arrangements have been made with a Waterville Parks & Recreation staff member.
2. Refunds – There will be no refund of your league fee once the season has started, or if you are prohibited to play on a Waterville field. Any refunds prior to the start of the season, removal from the schedule at any point during the season, and end of the season playoff eligibility, are at the sole discretion of the Parks and Recreation Department.
3. Cancellation and game times – Parks and Recreation will notify team captains through multiple avenues whenever possible, including email, text and/or facebook posts. **We will not call captains for cancellations.** Any player can be added to the email and text list by contacting our office. Any team found on a field after a rain cancellation, or when a Parks & Recreation employee deems the field unplayable, will be sanctioned. Sanctions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
4. Scoreboard - The League Administrator will be responsible for operating the scoreboard. At no time will anyone under the age of 18 be allowed to run the scoreboard.
5. Trash - Waterville Parks & Recreation has a carry in – carry out policy. Therefore, all players and spectators are required to carry out any item that was brought to the field. There are no trash cans available at any field for this purpose.
6. Smoking and alcohol – Smoking and alcohol use are strictly prohibited on the field, benches, spectator areas and parking lots. Anyone found breaking this rule will be removed from the league for the remainder of the season.
7. Profanity – There is a casual profanity rule in effect. Please remember that this is a family area and players and spectators should refrain from the use of profanity.

## II. The Game Basics

1. At the start of the game, two representatives from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have four (4) plays to score a touchdown.
4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
5. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line.
6. All possession changes, except interceptions and fumble recoveries, start on the offense's 5-yard line.

7. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

### III. Rosters

1. A final roster, including all team players and signatures, is due **no later than October 5<sup>th</sup>**. Changes to the roster can be made up until the team's fourth scheduled game. Changes after that are made at the discretion of the Parks & Recreation Department. *If the roster is not submitted by **October 5<sup>th</sup>**, teams may be removed from the schedule until the roster is submitted.* Removal from the schedule is at the sole discretion of the Parks & Recreation Department. Any team that has not submitted a roster by **November 2<sup>nd</sup>**, will be ineligible for the end of the season playoffs.
2. All players must be at least 18 years of age.
3. Rosters must have a minimum of six (6) players and a maximum of twelve (12) players.
4. Only players on approved rosters are eligible to play in the league.
5. Teams must start a game with a minimum of six (6) players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient players may play with five (5) players. At no time will a team be allowed to play with less than five (5) players on the field.

### IV. Equipment

1. Teams and players will be provided with a flag belt. Footballs may or may not be provided so teams are encouraged to bring their own to use. Footballs must be in acceptable condition and properly inflated to be used.
2. Players must wear shirts and shoes. Football cleats are acceptable, however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
3. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all watches, earrings, and any other jewelry that are deemed hazardous.
5. Jerseys and/or uniforms are not required but are encouraged.
6. Player jerseys must be tucked into the pants if they hang below the belt line.

### V. Regulation Times and Overtime

1. Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with two 20-minute halves. The clock stops only for timeouts and injuries.
2. Halftimes are 10-minutes long.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 15 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.

4. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
5. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, then there will be a five (5) minute overtime combined with the NCAA styled ruling of overtime. How this would work is at the end of regulation play, two representatives from each team will meet at midfield for a coin flip. The home team will call the toss. The winner of the coin toss will then choose to have the ball first or have the ball second.
  - a. The team who starts with the ball first will start on the opposing 20-yard line and will have four downs to score a touchdown.
  - b. The opposing team will then have four downs to attempt to score a touchdown. If the team who had first chance scores a touchdown and then stops the opposing team from scoring on their four down attempts, that team with the first attempts will be awarded the win.
  - c. If the team with the first four down attempts does not score and the opposing team does, then the opposing team will be awarded the win.
  - d. The two teams will alternate otherwise until time expires. Once time expires then the game will be decided as a tie.

## **VI. Scoring**

1. Touchdown: 1 point
2. Safety: 1 point
  - a. A safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone.
  - b. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.
3. Mercy Rule: There will be no mercy rule applied.

## **VII. Live Ball / Dead Ball**

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the play is dead.
2. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
3. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play.
4. The play is ruled 'dead' when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground.
  - b. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
  - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
  - e. The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.

- f. The ball carrier's flag falls out.
  - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flags.
  - h. When a fumble is recovered by either team.
- 5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
  - 6. All plays are self-officiated so honesty and good sportsmanship strongly applies.

## **VIII. Passing**

- 1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 2. Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 3. The quarterback will not have a "pass clock".

## **IX. Receiving**

- 1. All players except the blocker are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- 2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
- 3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- 4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- 5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions and fumbles are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
- 6. Interceptions are non-returnable.

## **X. Rushing the Passer**

- 1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 2-yards from the line of scrimmage prior to when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback on as many downs as desired. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- 2. Teams are not required to have a rusher.
- 3. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in roughing the passer penalty.
- 4. The blocker may attempt to block the rusher. However, the blocker may only defend within the rusher chest region.
- 5. A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback's feet are when the flag is pulled. A safety is

awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

## **XI. Flag Pulling**

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey. The player called for flag guarding will be ruled down from the spot of the foul.

## **XII. Formations**

1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four (4) players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
  - a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
  - b. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
2. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.
3. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

## **XIII. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
2. Offensive or controversial language is illegal. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, they will be given one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse anyone.
4. Ball carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
6. Continuous offensive and defensive pass interferences are going to be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

## **XIV. Terminology**

1. **Boundary Lines:** the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and back of the end zone lines.
2. **Line Of Scrimmage:** (LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
3. **Line-To-Gain:** the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
4. **Rush Line:** an imaginary line running across the width of the field 7 yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
5. **Offense:** the squad with the possession of the ball.
6. **Defense:** the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.
7. **Passer:** the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
8. **Rusher:** the defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or blocking the pass.
9. **Blocker:** the offensive player assigned to snap the ball to the passer. After he/she will protect the passer from the rusher attempting to pull the passers flag.
10. **Downs:** the offensive squad has four attempts or “downs” to advance the ball. They must cross the line to gain another set of downs or to score.
11. **Live Ball:** refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties, live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
12. **Dead Ball:** refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
13. **Charging:** the movement of the ball carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head, making contact with the defender with a shoulder, forearm, or the chest.
14. **Flag Guarding:** an act by the ball carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball carrier’s flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head, or by blocking access to the runner’s flags with a hand or arm.
15. **Shovel Pass:** a legal pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot put type manner.
16. **Lateral:** a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the ball carrier. Laterals are

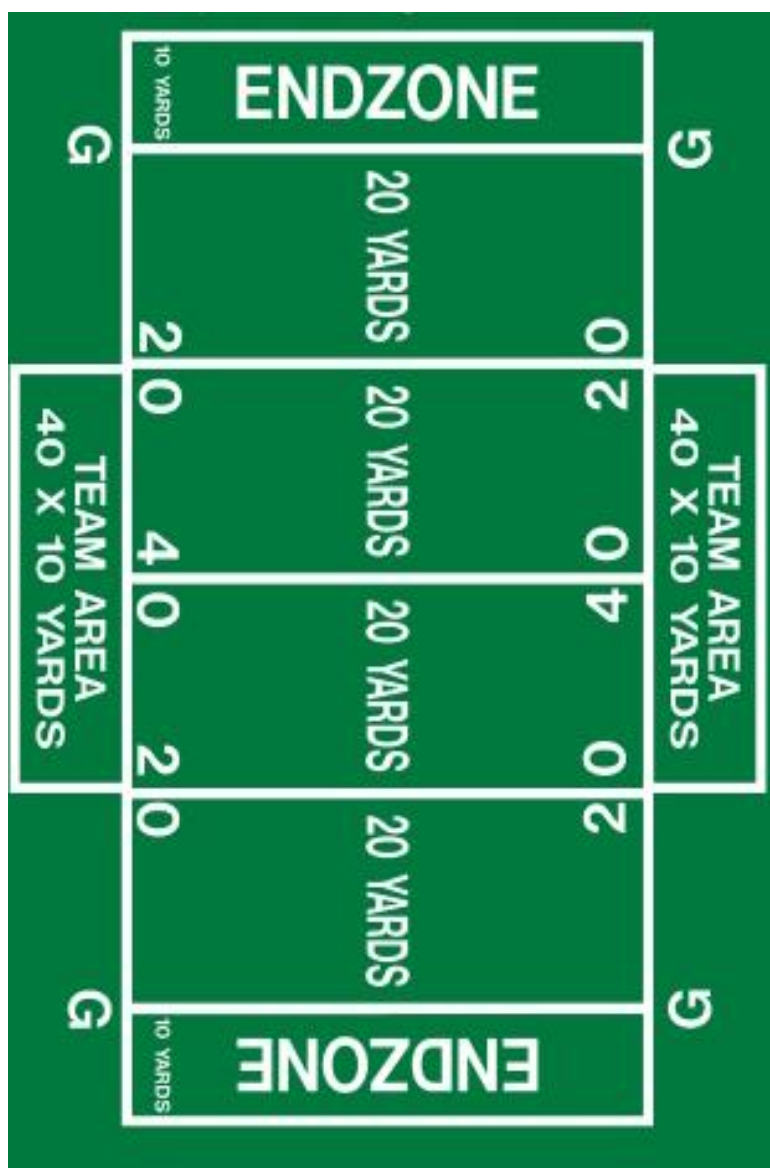


illegal in this league.

17. **Interception:** in which the ball is intended for a player of the same team but caught by a player of the opposing team, in which gains possession of the ball for their team. When an interception takes place the play will be ruled dead and the team will start their possession from the spot of the interception.

18. **Fumble:** occurs when a player who has possession and control of the ball loses it before having their flag removed or scoring. Fumbles can be recovered by the opposing team if not forced. The opposing team will then have possession in which the fumble was recovered. If the fumble is recovered by the team which had possession, that team will continue its possession.

## XV. Estimated Field Diagram



**Field Dimensions:**

**80 yards long x 53 ½ yards wide.**